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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

G. P. Morris.

1858

MEMORIAL

OF

JESSIE WILLIS:

PREPARED FOR HER LITTLE DAUGHTERS,

ANNIE, BLANCHE AND JESSIE,

By their Father.

NEW YORK: APRIL, 1858.

[FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION.]

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FUNERAL ADDRESS,

BY REV. GEORGE H. HOUGHTON.

[Delivered at the Church of the Transfiguration, New York, April 11th, 1858.]

It has not been the custom in this place, my friends, in performing the present duty, to add so much as a single word to the simple and sufficient order, which the Church has provided, for the burial of the dead.

Hither childhood and youth, manhood, womanhood, and age,—the father, the mother, the husband, the wife, the child, the brother, the sister, the "friend which is as thine own soul" [Deut. xiii. 6]—when their all of this world was over and their all of another begun, have been brought, that we might pay to their lifeless remains that last tribute of respect which piety and affection prompt; and never yet, until to-day, in any case, has utterance been given to aught else beside the appointed sentences, and Psalms, and Lesson, and Anthems, and Declaration, and Prayers. Surely in this hith-

erto unvarying practice, it need not be said that there has been no lack of love, no want of especial interest, in regard of the departed. For the nearest and the dearest have sanctified this spot. The practice has been observed from the single and sincere conviction that he, at least, whose office it is to minister here, could in nowise contribute to the further perfection and completeness of the prescribed ritual for the dead,—from the fear, rather, that his own words might mar its beauty and affect its impressiveness.

But to-day, brethren, there must needs be a deviation from this course,—a few words *must* be ventured beyond those provided by the Church. And this, not so much that we may attempt that more than mortal task of comforting him, whose voice and hand have here so long, for the glory of God, enhanced, as never another, the sweetness of our songs of joy, and the mournfulness of our strains of woe—albeit is his this day a universal sympathy; not so much that we may commend to God's more than ordinary protection and blessing those motherless little ones—albeit, most fervently, that is now done—each of whom these hands have consecrated to Him in Holy Baptism; not so much that we may seek, in any degree, to soothe the voice once heard in Rama, or strive to minister strength to age sink-

ing underneath the weight of its own ills, now so greatly aggravated; nor so much because that, in this place, and from these hands, she, who is now before us, received for the first time the sacrament of that Body and that Blood which, we doubt not, *have* preserved her soul, and *will* preserve her body to everlasting life: for in this particular respect hers is no peculiarity.

But, my brethren, our hitherto unvarying practice in burying our dead, is broken for the single and simple reason, that there is in the present case that which demands something beyond and above all this—which distinguishes it, in so far as my own experience is concerned, from every other. It is because that in this sanctuary, on this holy day, in the presence of the dead and before you all, with every thing to restrain all rash, exaggerated, unpremeditated utterance, I wish to pay this high tribute and bear this consoling testimony to the memory of our deceased sister.

For twelve years a merciful God has, of His goodness, permitted me to be the minister of His comforts and His grace to the sick and the dying. During that time—blessed be His name!—He has never called me to stand beside a single person who by word or outward gesture, manifested a reluctance, or even an unwillingness, to die. It has ever

been my happy lot to minister in my measure to such only as at the last, to all human appearance, fearlessly and calmly stepped into the cold waters of the river that flows between us and our heavenly home. I do not know that I have ever witnessed an unhopeful or an unwilling death, whatever at first may have been the natural shrinkings and apprehensions. But here, before God and you all, I testify that her death, whose lifeless remains are in our presence, has been the crown of them all. With every thing to bind her here—with the yearning love of a mother, who from beyond the half-closed gate of death could hear her infant's voice, and return to fold to her bosom each of her children, and, most lovingly of all, that little one for whose life, Rachel-like, she was giving her own; with the satisfied heart of a wife, who, twining her cold arms around the neck of him in whom her earthly heaven was centred, could say that not a word or a look had ever been otherwise than she desired, that he had been her all, her every thing, that the past seven years had been years of such unmingled happiness; with every thing of worldly circumstance that could contribute to the comfort and enjoyment of life; with none but friends; and in the opening, too, of nature's sweetness and beauty (this bright spring-time of bud, and leaf, and flower!)—more

gently, more calmly, more cheerfully, with more of childlike trustfulness than any other that I have ever known, she left all, and followed the Good Shepherd to the still waters and the green pastures.

Yes, beloved! with no bitter past; with no painful present; with no unhopeful future; with no poverty; no lifelong, incurable malady; with nothing to render the world a weariness, but every thing to attract and bind thee here,—I bear thee witness, in this solemn hour and in this holy place, that, by the power of the divine grace vouchsafed thee, more sweetly, more calmly, with more cheerful and entire resignation, didst thou bow to the will of God, than any other, of all that I have ever known, has done, whom want and lingering disease, and woe, and every infelicity had long and wholly deprived of every enjoyment, of every anticipation. In memory, then, of that midnight communion; in memory of the consecration of thy babe in Baptism by thy dying bed; in memory of the ineffable tenderness of thine every look and gesture; in memory of the plaintive sweetness of thine every word; of the childlike touchingness of thine every tone; of the hitherto unimagined depth of Christian feeling and purity and grace, which thy last agony so wonderfully revealed; and in memory of thine eyes, so constantly and trustfully returning to rest upon the

lineaments of the Crucified in view of thy dying pillow,—at this hour, in this place, in this presence, when words should be measured and tones even subdued, I, thy friend and pastor, bear thee testimony, that though in death many daughters have done virtuously—thou—thou—thou—hast excelled them all. [Prov. xxxi. 29.]

April 11th, 1858.

COMMUNICATION

From the Rector and Vestry of the Church of the Transfiguration, New York.

1 East 29th Street,
April 15th, 1858.

My dear Mr. Willis :—At a meeting of our vestry, on Monday evening, April 12th, 1858, I was directed to convey to you the inclosed expression of our sympathy with you in your present bereavement; and to have a copy of the same entered by the clerk in the book of our minutes.

In complying with the direction, let me also myself assure you how fully we each condole with you. May the God of all consolation Himself comfort and support you with the thought that perhaps she therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldst receive her for ever. [Phil., 15.] She has entered into her chamber, and shut the doors about her, and hidden herself but for a little moment—the moment of time. [Is. xxvi. 20.]

Most faithfully and affectionately
Your friend and Pastor,
G. H. Houghton.

"Forasmuch as it hath pleased our Heavenly Father, by the removal from among us of Mrs. Jessie Willis, to remind us that, to rise with our crucified Saviour, we must first, in very deed, pass with Him through the valley of the shadow of death,

"Therefore, be it resolved, that we hereby express our deep sympathy with our respected associate, Mr. Richard Storrs Willis; while with him we rejoice in the full assurance of the present happiness and future eternal bliss of her who, when with us,—by her innate purity, by her perfect simplicity, by her true humility, by her thorough unselfishness, by her unconscious exhibition of the graces which adorn the Christian wife and mother,—afforded us an example which we may well hold up as one worthy of devout imitation.

"May we, when called upon to pay the penalty of our first parents' transgression, with equal cheerfulness resign all we may so justly hold most dear on earth, and, with like unlimited faith, repose upon the bosom of Him who hath opened unto us the gate of everlasting life."

F. E. Siffken, G. B. Docharty, *Wardens.*
A. A. Alvord,
W. B. Ballow,
C. V. A. Schuyler,
S. Hyatt,
C. Zabriskie, Jr.,
A. Embury,
N. W. Chater.

CLOSING REMARKS,

BY REV. G. W. PORTER.

[In a Sermon delivered at Christ Church, Manhasset, the mother's usual place of worship during the summer months.]

* * * It is in view of the Divine truth, which we have now been considering, namely, Christ's power to destroy death and to redeem his victims unto eternal life, that we would, in conclusion, address words of Christian sympathy and ghostly comfort to those of this congregation who have, in the Providence of God, been called so lately to follow to the grave the mortal remains of one who, in the respective relationships of daughter, wife, mother, and friend, was all that was filial, conjugal, maternal, and true. Suddenly called from hence to the unseen world, she has left, as an unspeakably precious memorial to all who lament her early death, the clear and consolatory evidence that she was eminently fitted for the great and final change that has overtaken her. Having been endowed by nature, as I have been informed, with peculiar amiability and gentleness of disposition, as a Chris-

tian, all the more winning characteristics and attractive graces of the Spirit marked her mortal career. And although highly blessed in all her earthly relations, yet, as a faithful disciple of Christ, she held all things earthly and temporal in holy subjection to the will of her Heavenly Father. Her daily life was thus a daily preparation for death. In Christ she lived while yet in the flesh; in Christ she died when the flesh was laid aside; and in Christ her disembodied spirit, we doubt not, now rejoices and triumphs. Her last expiring breath was expended in solemn but joyous commemoration of that infinite and final sacrifice which was consummated on Calvary by the Son of God, for the sins of the whole world. Her filial trust in her Heavenly Father thus became brighter and more profound as the passage of her mortal spirit grew darker and more lonely; so that it may in truth be said of her, that she passed hence to the world unseen, "having the testimony of a good conscience; in the communion of the Catholic Church; in the confidence of a certain faith; in the comfort of a seasonable, religious, and holy hope; in favor with God and in perfect charity with the world."

Let those, then, who, from their personal and intimate relations to the departed, mourn her sudden and early removal from this imperfect state to the

blessed and glorious home of the redeemed, be comforted with other and more than earthly comfort; for from earthly and temporal sources cannot be drawn that profound and divine consolation which alone has power to soothe the bereaved heart and to speak peace to the agitated and troubled spirit. Therefore hath Christ died to atone for sin and to vanquish death. Hence is He the sinner's only Saviour, the mourner's Divine Consolator, the celestial Enlightener of the grave, the Resurrection of the dead and the Life of the world to come. In Him, therefore, repose; in Him assuage thy grief; in Him be comforted; in Him, and in Him alone, be both now and eternally blessed.

LETTER FROM MR. BRYANT.

ROSLYN, *October* 11th, 1858.

MY DEAR MR. WILLIS:—I am glad that you think of doing honor to the memory of your late excellent wife, by putting into a volume the testimonials to her worth, in the hope that they may hereafter awaken in her children and other descendants a desire to imitate her example. It appears to me, that I have scarce ever known a character, the elements of which were so happily proportioned and combined, as a preparation for ingrafting on it the graces and virtues of a highly cultivated moral and religious nature. An instinctive benevolence, which embraced all her fellow-creatures, strong domestic affections, freedom from all taint of hatred or envy, a great unwillingness to believe ill or speak ill of others, the most amiable docility, an earnest desire to obey all the calls of duty, the most cheerful contentment in the ordinary condition of life, and the sweetest patience under adverse circumstances, were always remarkable in her daily life; and it seemed to me that, with the advance of years, these qualities acquired consist-

ency and strength, and ripened into a more beautiful and harmonious whole.

I was, as you know, in a foreign land when I was startled with the news of her premature death, the circumstances of which were fully related to me. It then occurred to me, that if such a calamity could admit of consolation, her friends must have found it in the calm religious resignation with which she gave up a life which had been so happy, meeting death as an event of which she had no fear, and making for it the most wise, thoughtful, and affectionate dispositions.

It seems, therefore, in the highest degree proper, that, cherishing her memory as you do, you should seek to give it some more permanent repository than mere personal recollection, which must pass away with the lives of those who were so fortunate as to have known her. As one of that number, I shall be happy if my testimony to her virtues shall be thought worthy to be included in the memorial you are preparing.

I am, dear sir,
With great regard and esteem,
Wm. C. Bryant.

R. Storrs Willis, Esq.

NOTICES OF THE PRESS.

No. 1.

FROM THE N. Y. EVENING POST.

[BY PARKE GODWIN.]

A LARGE concourse of relatives and of sympathizing friends was gathered at the Church of the Transfiguration, in Twenty-ninth street, yesterday, to participate in the funeral ceremonies of Mrs. Richard Storrs Willis, wife of the editor of *The Musical World.* The occasion was in itself full of sorrow and tears, but the attending circumstances—the weeping April day, the crowd of mourners, the impressive service of the Church, the solemn burial chants and the few simple and touching words of the pastor, Mr. Houghton, (more touching in their simplicity than the most elaborate eulogy,) in which he portrayed the sweet serenity and cheerful resignation of the deceased in her last moments—deepened the hue of the emotions naturally incited by

the event. Death is always awful; but when its pale hand falls, as in this case, upon the young, the amiable, and the happy, carrying them suddenly away from the brightest scenes of life—bereaving aged parents, who expected to go before—leaving little children, unconscious of their loss, motherless, and a devoted husband desolate and alone—it falls with an appalling and stunning effect. Mrs. Willis died on Friday last, after a week's suffering, from having given birth to a daughter.

Our great poet, connecting the fall of the leaf and the decay of the year with the departure of cherished friends, derives a mournful consolation from the thought, that it is "not unmeet the gentle and the beautiful should perish with the flowers." And, in the same spirit, we may suggest, that neither is it wholly unmeet that they should go in the spring of life and in the spring of the year; for, the concurrence may remind us that, like the flowers, which are bursting into bloom upon earth, they, too, are bursting into the bloom of another and more radiant sphere.

No. 2.

FROM THE HOME JOURNAL.

[BY N. P. WILLIS.]

THE funeral of Mrs. Jessie Willis, which took place on Sunday, the eleventh instant, at the Episcopal Church in Twenty-ninth street, was, from many combining circumstances, unusually impressive. Residing opposite the vicarage and directing the music of the church, Mr. Willis with his family held almost the same relation to its sacred associations as the family of the pastor. The funeral was separate from the usual service of the afternoon; but, as the body was borne across the street, and received at the entrance with the playing of a solemn dirge and with the reciting of the initiatory passages of the burial ceremony, the two naves of the beautiful structure were densely crowded with friends and mourners. The coffin was deposited before the chancel, and in the course of the service was sung one of the most affectingly-beautiful chants it has ever been our privilege to hear. It was composed by Mr. Willis on the occasion of the death of the mother of the clergyman who was now to perform the service, and had been sung before, only on that one occasion. But. in addition to this touching in-

terest, it was sung by one who was a personal friend of the deceased, and who, as a singer of sacred music, is probably without an equal. Julia Bodestein's voice, coming, as it always seems to do, through tears, was intensified, in the singing of this chant, to a weeping agony of sweetness almost supernatural. To the unutterable grief of the mourner, it seemed, for that moment, to reach and lend an utterance! The rapt and tearful singer sang with her heart as well as with her wonderful skill, and there was a spell in it, it is not too much to say, which might well make the Angel of Death look back with sorrow on his victim.

Mr. Houghton, the clergyman, departed from his usual custom, by coming forward to the railing of the chancel and introducing the service with a brief address over the body. The young mother who lay before him had been one of the purest and loveliest of his flock. She was one of those rare completenesses of character for whom their share of happiness in this world seems just enough. In the last hour of her life she expressed her thanks to God that, as a wife and mother, she had been as entirely blest as she could conceive it possible to be. Simple from her exceeding purity, beautiful in person and of manners made most winning by her utter unconsciousness and disinterestedness, she was too

natural to seem to the common eye the exception that she really was. And, to these qualities alluding delicately, Mr. Houghton paid full tribute to the dead as one of the children of his flock. It was an address of subdued and touching tenderness, and marked throughout with exceeding judgment and good taste.

The service over, and the handful of earth thrown upon the coffin, the body was borne to the hearse, attended by the vestry of the church as pall-bearers; and the funeral procession then went upon its way to Greenwood. Mrs. Willis was there laid in the family vault of her father, Mr. Cairns. She leaves three children, the youngest of whom is but three weeks old—a puerperal fever, consequent upon its birth, having been the occasion of her most sudden and unexpected death.

No. 3.

FROM THE N. Y. LEDGER.

[BY FANNY FERN.]

I HAVE been to a funeral to-day. It was in a church;—I had to pass through a garden to reach it;—the warm rain was dropping gently on the shrubs and early flowers, and inside, warm tears

were falling; for before the chancel lay a coffin, and in it was a fair young wife and mother, pale and sweet as the white flowers that lay upon the coffin-lid. Near it was her husband, and beside him were her aged parents, bowed down with grief that she, who they thought would close their fading eyes, should fade first. In a house opposite the church, were the dead mother's babe, only a few days old, and two other little ones, just old enough to prattle unconsciously as they went from room to room, "Mamma has gone away." I knew, though they did not, how day after day would pass, and these little girls who had always seen mamma *come back again*, after she had "gone away," would stand at the window, looking this way and that, with their little bright faces, and listening for her light footstep, and my heart ached and my eyes filled as I thought, how every day as they grew older they would need her care, and feel her loss, the more; for it is only in part that a father, even the kindest, can fill a watchful mother's place;—he, whose business must be out of doors and away; how can he know how weary the little feet get wandering up and down, with no mamma's lap to climb upon; how weary the little hands,—putting down one thing, and taking up another, with no mamma to nod smilingly and say, "I see"—or "it is very

pretty, dear;" how home-sick the little rifled heart feels, though it scarce knows why; how tasteless the pretty cup of milk mamma used to hold to the rosy lips; how empty parlor and nursery, chamber and hall. How much less gentle is nurse's touch than hers; how much sooner she wearies of answering little curious questions; and getting bits of string and toys for restless fingers to play with; how much longer seems the time now, before papa comes home to dinner and tea,—poor papa—who with an iron hand crushes down his own great sorrow, and tries and fails to speak to them in *her* soft, sweet, winning way; and tries and fails, to soothe their little insect griefs, though he would die to save them a heart-pang.

All this I thought of as I looked at these two little curly-headed girls and their baby sister; and I said to myself, I do not know why God took away their young mother whose work just seemed begun, and left the aged grandparents who were waiting to go. Why he made that house desolate and silent, once so musical? Why he turned those tender lambs out from that soft warm fold? With all my thinking I could not find that out; but I am just as sure as if I could that he did it in love, not in anger; I am just as sure as if I were in heaven this minute that it was best and right; though they, and

you and I, must wait till we get there to know the how and why.

No. 4.

FROM THE MUSICAL WORLD.

[BY EDWARD HODGES, MUS. DOC.]

The sorrows of domestic life, howsoever poignant, are seldom of a nature to permit them to be obtruded upon the public eye. Yet peculiar circumstances may sometimes render it improper to avoid all allusion to them.

The readers of the *Musical World* ought to be informed of the great calamity which has suddenly befallen Mr. R. S. Willis, the justly esteemed editor of this paper; if for no other reason, in order that they may extend to him their Christian sympathy in his heart-rending affliction. Mr. Willis has been bereft of his tender and affectionate wife, whose pure companionship had gladdened his heart and converted his home into as much of a paradise as is allowed to mortal man. A few short, rapturous years elapse, and that joyous presence ceases. His house is left unto him desolate. May his heart be comforted by Him who alone can assuage such grief, even "the God of all comfort."

The contemplation of death is at all times fearful. When the aged are cut down, after an active life of prolonged and honorable usefulness, we mourn their loss. It is hard to part with an old friend. Our tears *must* flow. Love demands them, and love is of heavenly birth. Even the blessed Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus.

But there is something intensely affecting in the decease of a young and lovely wife and mother. Our souls are stricken with grief which knows not words.

Yet there is *hope*. Beyond the narrow grave there is a region of bliss unspeakable, and thither we trust the happy spirit of our dear departed friend has flown; for her humble trust was reposed in Him who has said, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest."

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; for they rest from their labors"

Ein Trost.

Für

Richard Storrs Willis.

[From *The Musical World.*]

Ist hier dein Grab? Wohl deinen Namen schrieben
Sie auf dies schmucklos stille Kreuz und haben
Dein Kleid dann, deine Hülle, hier begraben; —
Sie mag — was frommt's zu klagen? — hier zerstieben.

Du bist ja doch lebendig mir geblieben,
Wir strebten nicht nach ird'schen Liebesgaben,
Dort unter Sternen seh' ich nun erhaben
Dein Bild mir leuchten, rein, wie unser Lieben.

Nicht dort allein in jenen sel'gen Räumen
Sucht dich mein Herz und findet dich mein Auge;
Auch hier, wo ich noch frisches Leben sauge,
Umschwebst du mich im Wachen, wie in Träumen.

Verklärt hast du auf's Neu' mir dieses Leben,
Mit allen Zaubern der Natur verbunden
Seh' ich dein Bild als Leuchte vor mir schweben.

Durch dich hab' ich zum Licht den Weg gefunden.
Du lehrst mich handeln, nach dem Höchsten streben,
Bis ich, wie du, das Leben überwunden.

Shelbyville, Ky. Von J. H. Kappes.

LINES

ON THE DEATH OF MRS. JESSIE WILLIS.

After life's eventful mission,
In her truthfulness and worth,
Like a calm and gentle vision
She has passed away from earth.

Lovely she in frame and feature!
Blended purity and grace!—
The Creator in the creature
Glow'd in her expressive face!

Angel of a nature human!
Essence of celestial love!
Heart and soul of trusting woman,
Gone to her reward above!

Mourners, dry your tears of sorrow—
Read the golden promise o'er:
There will dawn a cheerful morrow
When we meet to part no more.

Geo. P. Morris.

Undercliff, Cold Spring,
Nov. 11, 1858.

LETTERS FROM FRIENDS.

No. 1.

FROM REV. SAMUEL COX.

[Formerly Rector of Christ Church, Manhasset.]

1343 Lombard st.,
Philadelphia, *April 12th*, 1858.

My dear Mr. Willis:—The intelligence has been to me most sad and startling of your dear wife's sudden death. I have learned, as yet, none of the circumstances of her illness, yet I cannot refrain from saying to you, in the first impulse of *my* grief for her departure from us, a word of sympathy in *your* sorrow, which is, oh! so *much* heavier. She was one of the last whom I had ever thought of, as Death's subject and choice. There was about her so much *living* and ever-breathing kindliness and gentleness of spirit, that the thought of her, and the love for her, entwined itself unconsciously around one's heart and led one to repose *too* quietly and confidently in the sunshine of her presence. Ever since I have known her, and more especially since

that evening when I joined together you and her in that holy bond, I have felt that to know her better was to love her more. Do I speak of her thus only to add to your grief at her loss? Nay, my dear friend, but with the thought in my own heart, which I would offer to yours, that she whom *we* have so loved hath been also loved by One, of whose abiding and all-caring love that of husband, and parent and friend, is but the imperfect and faint reflection. And is it not in very token of His acceptance of her,—those natural traits of loveliness being all refined, and yet more elevated and purified by her love for Him and by the mysterious sanctifying of His Spirit,—that He has now called her to Himself and to her eternal home? She has had her troubles, but they are over now, and her sweet spirit has gone, we trust, in God's great mercy, where only happiness is its portion. She has left with you, in those little motherless ones, her memorials, at once your care and your living remembrances of *her*.

May that sure comfort come to your sorrow which the Great Comforter will give to all, who rest upon Him their faith and their hope.

Believe me, my dear friend,

Most sincerely yours,

Samuel Cox.

No. 2.

FROM REV. GORHAM D. ABBOTT.

Spingler Institute, N. Y.,
Sabbath Evening, *April* 18*th*, 1858.

My dear Sir:—I scarcely know whether our acquaintance with you and yours justifies my offering to you the assurance of that sympathy in your bereavement which we most sincerely feel. There are, however, a few lines, which have been such a source of sweet, suggestive solace to others, in similar sorrows, that I will venture to transcribe them, in the hope that they may be grateful to you. I am sure, from what we have heard, they must be peculiarly appropriate to the circumstances of your loss.

"A VOICE FROM HEAVEN."

I shine in the light of God,
His likeness stamps my brow,
Through the shadows of death my feet have trod,
And I reign in glory now.

No aching heart is here,
No keen and thrilling pain,
No wasted cheek, where the frequent tear
Hath rolled and left its stain.

I have found the joys of Heaven,
I am one of the Angel Band,
To my head a crown is given,
And a Harp is in my hand.

I have learned the song they sing
Whom Jesus has set free,
And the glorious walls of Heaven now ring
With my new-born melody.

No sin,—no grief,—no pain,
Safe in my happy home,
My doubts all quelled, my fears all slain,
Mine hour of triumph come.

Friends of my mortal years,
The trusted and the true,
Ye are walking still thro' the valley of tears,
And I wait to welcome you.

Do I forget? O! No,—
For memory's golden chain
Still binds my heart to the hearts below,
Till they meet and touch again.

Each link is strong and bright,
And love's celestial flame
Flows swiftly down, like a river of light,
To the world from which I came.

Then why should your tears flow down,
And your heart be sorely riven,
For another gem in your Saviour's crown
And another soul in Heaven.

Accept the assurance of our prayer, that "God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforteth us in our tribulation, may comfort you with the comfort, wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."

I am, with much esteem,
Yours sincerely,
GORHAM D. ABBOTT.

No. 3.

FROM MRS. DANA SHINDLER.

Will Mr. Willis allow a stranger to intrude for a moment upon his sorrow, while she strives to utter a word of consolation? I have experienced the same sorrow, and know what it is. When a child, during a visit to Boston, I saw your mother, and loved to stand at her knee, because I fancied she resembled mine; and I have now a distinct recollection of her motherly, benignant countenance. On

this account, I have always felt an interest in her children. So I know you will excuse my intrusion.

COMFORT IN SORROW.

Calmly the wife and mother sleeps
On her cold bed, in hallowed ground;
While he who loved her lonely weeps,
Nursing his grief profound.

But ever, 'mid his deepest gloom,
Comes there a whisper to his ear,—
"Why bend you o'er this silent tomb?
Your loved one is not there!"

Raise up thy head, dejected one!
Look upward to the sun-lit skies!
See what a glorious home is won
When the believer dies!

Her bright young life is brighter now
Than when she lived upon thy smile;
Earth has its cares—and even thou
Could'st not those cares beguile.

"Rejoice with those who do rejoice,"
As well as "weep with those who weep;"
Then, with glad songs and cheerful voice
Her heavenly birthday keep.

Ye are not parted;—she may be
Thy ministering angel here;
And where thou pray'st, on bended knee,
She may be with thee there.

Ye are not parted;—she may wait,
When thy Redeemer calls thee home,
To meet thee at the golden gate,
Saying, "Come up hither, come!"

No. 71 West 17th street, N. Y.

No. 4.

The following thought, in a letter of congratulation on the birth of little Jessie from her grandfather, Mr. N. Willis, of Boston, addressed to the mother—but not received till after her death—is perhaps not out of place here. In speaking of the three little sisters, he says:

"I hope they will all live to love and serve the Lord. And there is one reason to hope they will, because there are a great many more female Christians than male. The female sex have the greatest share of the curse, and the greatest share of the blessing. They were last at the cross and first at the tomb of our Saviour. I think that they never denied him nor forsook him."

TO MANY FRIENDS.

One of the consolations which a great sorrow brings with it, is its clearer revelation to us of our friends. Friends known and friends unknown. Our known friends appear to us in a light touchingly new; and our unknown friends become suddenly manifest to us. This has doubtless been the experience of many a person who has been called upon to pass through deep waters and who has therefore been led to think better of the world and his fellow-men: but it is new to me—and I confess that the unsuspected kindliness of strangers, thus revealed, touches me deeply.

One of the uses of this little volume, indeed, which I chiefly prize, is that it may be made to reach if possible each one who has been thus mindful of me and mine, to whose kindness I could not in every case personally respond and to whom I would thus show, that such kindness was not unheeded by me and is not forgotten.

But, to those who were actively of service during the last trying scenes of death and burial, I can-

not refrain from an expression of special and heart-felt thanks—among such are the tender and unwearied lady-watchers at the bedside of the dear departed; my beloved friend and Rector, Mr. Houghton; my kind fellow-vestrymen of the church; Mrs. Bodstein, whose pathetic requiem so deeply appealed to us; Mr. William Scharfenberg, whose subdued tenderness reached us through the organ; the dear boy-choristers of the church and their leader; and (in many kind offices, then, as in days past) my faithful friend, Mr. Charles Gould.

R. S. W.

TO ANNIE, BLANCHE AND JESSIE:

FROM THEIR FATHER.

My dear little Daughters:—You are very young now. Annie is not yet four, Blanche but a year and nine months and Jessie four weeks only; and yet you are not too young to have lost the most precious thing you will ever have in this world—your mother. My little lambs are now left desolate in their fold: the dear, gentle shepherdess, who so tenderly cared for them, has been taken away. But He, who so softly lured her to His fold, is the Good Shepherd himself; who, I am sure, will not suffer the winds of this world to visit my little lambs too roughly.

Poor, dear mamma!—she was so youthful, so innocent, so unspotted of the world, that when I think back upon her she seems more like an elder sister of yours, than your mother, my darlings!

One of these days, when you are older, you will begin to think, and think, more and more. When you see other little girls who have their own, living mothers, you will think much of your

poor dead mother—and I am afraid you will be heavy-hearted: and it is for this reason that I have wished to leave you all I could that is sweet and comforting about her, to console you, even when I myself, perhaps, may be no longer with you to talk about her. I have, therefore, had put into this little book some of the true and beautiful things which were said about her when she was lying dead in God's house, among flowers and among friends, and some that were written about her when she was taken to that beautiful garden, where she is now so peacefully sleeping—the same garden where the other day, dear Annie, you said you wished you might "go and always sleep with dear mamma, too."

Well, Annie dear, such is often, of late, my own wish. But we must wait. And when He, "the dear God," as you tenderly call Him, sends word to us, that in the day of our life it is now sun-set, and the sweetest of any bed-time has come; that the soft pillow and the beautiful garden are ready for us—then we shall go: and we will try to bid the world as cheerful a good-night as dear mamma: not that we are tired of it: O no!—but because the Good Father is waiting for us.

Besides what others have so beautifully and truly said, it has seemed to me, however, that I,

too, ought to say something about her who is gone: for of course I knew her better than any one else possibly could—although, indeed, it appears to me that even I did not truly know her until she came to die!

So let me begin by telling you a story: and I doubt not you will pretty well understand it before I proceed very far:—and even though there may be some things, possibly, that are not quite so clear to you now, you will grow up to their meanings: for I intend this little book as a continual memorial to you of the dear mother who is gone.

I will begin my story, then, just as little Annie generally begins hers:—

"Once ago"—there lived in a great city a rather solitary young man, who, after passing many years in foreign countries, had returned at last, having lost sight, in the interval, of most of his school and college friends and forever lost sight of some of those whom he loved best in the world. His life had hitherto been a smooth and happy one; for Heaven had signally provided for him in every way. But now a change had come. His resources all fell away and this world was beginning to go very hard with him—the harder for its previous kindness. He had not much money—none, indeed, but what he could daily earn for himself; and a stranger in a large city finds it very hard to earn

any money at all. So he lived in the top room of a house and began to devise means to earn a living. After a little while he succeeded in making something by writing for the newspapers : shortly afterward he found he could earn still more by playing an organ in a church—for sacred music had ever been to him a delight and a study. In a short time, also, a very kind person who taught in some schools and was going away for a year, proposed to him to take his place while he was gone. So just now he was getting on very nicely and began to feel more sanguine. Yet money will not buy off loneliness, though it will buy bread and clothing ;—and besides, some things happened in his life, just then, which caused him to know this world from a very harsh and rough side; so that the sloping roof of his attic room seemed to press closer and closer down upon him and he found it more and more difficult to write about the gay, pleasant things of which it was his province to write in the newspapers.

One evening, just at twilight, he had climbed to his solitary attic quarters when, on opening the door, he thought his foot passed over a slip of paper—but it was so dark that he could not clearly distinguish what it really was. So, stooping to pick it up he found it was a card ; and on the card

was written an address, and a message, that a certain person wished to have an interview with him, on a matter of business, at a certain house in the city. He read the card over many times and supposed there must be some mistake; for he neither knew the address, nor had he ever been used to receive business applications—hitherto being obliged to seek business; business rarely seeking him. However, he went the very same evening to the house indicated; but, instead of proceeding immediately to enter, he crossed to the other side of the street and passed and re-passed the house; for he thought it very strange that he should thus have been sent for. At last, however, ashamed of his indecision, he crossed to the house, rang and a servant answering the bell he was shown into a very pretty and neat parlor. Here he waited a few moments, wondering more and more at the mysterious message, and who might have sent it and what was wanted. Finally the door opened and through it there seemed to enter, suddenly, a ray of soft, warm sunlight—which pervaded the room and shone deep down into his heart: for there came forward a fair young creature, dressed in pure white, her soft, wavy hair taken back a little from her snowy temples and her face illumed with a kind of indescribable, unworldly light.

Now, the young man had wandered about a good deal in the course of his life and had seen much of the light of this world's beauty; but it seemed to him that he never before had looked upon just such beauty as this, or seen a face of such entire innocence and purity. So he felt a kind of awe stealing over him in the young creature's presence;—and, I dare say he behaved himself very awkwardly, not helping forward the first few moments of the interview as he should have done: for the blood mantled in her face a moment. But she soon regained her simple and unconscious manner and begged her visitor to be seated.

She then went on to say that she lived in the country—her parents having a country-seat not far from the city; but that they also had apartments in the house where she was then staying, it being the residence of her father's business-agent:—that not very far from their country home was the church which they attended: in this church was an organ, but there was no one to play it:—that therefore she and the other young ladies of the church had thought they might learn to play the organ and take turns in the church service:—that a friend had said her visitor was well acquainted with the organ and would perhaps communicate some knowledge of the instrument to her.

So, then, all the mystery of the card and the message was thus unravelled.

Now, under ordinary circumstances the visit would probably have here suddenly ended, for the young man had just then so much other occupation that he had hardly a moment to himself—and how could he possibly find time to be escorting a strange young lady to a church and talking with her about an organ? Besides, although he played quite a majestic instrument, he had never properly learned to play; having slipped into organ-playing—he scarcely knew how himself. So it must be confessed, that if the lady had been very old or very plain, he would simply have said that he did not give organ-lessons and would have gone away. Indeed, he did go so far as to say that he did not teach the organ and had never given any lessons.

Thereupon the young lady seemed to grow very embarrassed, thinking evidently that she had made a great blunder and sent for entirely the wrong person.

But now her visitor quickly interposed again—for there was a certain strange movement, way down in his heart, which *something*, whenever and by whomever felt, is the movement of Destiny. So he went on directly to say, that if she would allow him he should, nevertheless, be very happy from

time to time to tell her all he knew about the organ and she could, if she liked, attend the rehearsals of his church-choir every Saturday evening and see how he played; that any day, or every day, while she remained in town, she could go to the church and play as differently and as much better than he did, as she liked.

Now the young lady evidently showed by her manner that things were taking an entirely wrong turn; and yet she did not know how to change or improve them; she seemed to shrink from being under obligations to any one, particularly an entire stranger; indeed, it was all very awkward and very embarrassing: her parents were not in the city to consult with—and what should she do? So, in her dilemma she probably did just what she really did not intend to do—and accepted the young man's proposition.

A few days passed, and Saturday came. The summer twilight was approaching and the two new acquaintances were threading the streets of the noisy city toward the quiet church, within whose massive walls the world and all its dissonance seemed to die away. And now it appeared to the young man, that he heard low music in his heart whenever she spoke. By the time the church was reached the twilight had much deepened, so that when the two were

about entering a chapel on the side of the main edifice, through which an entrance to the church was usually gained during the week, the deep shadows, within, caused both instinctively to hesitate a moment. But soon a light began to glimmer and they saw the sexton kindling a torch, by the light of which they entered and proceeded through the chapel. As they passed into the grand and solemn church and down the long aisle, the shadows danced on the lofty arches overhead and the flickering torch tipped with light the golden pipes of the organ, far, far in the distance above them.

And now the soft footfall of the young creature, as she swept quietly along, and the gleam of the torchlight on her white figure, which caused her apparently to stand forth alone from the darkness, sent a thrill through the young man—for she seemed to him like a white angel, gliding through the church, two other figures darkly accompanying her.

So the group passed out at the aisle-door and up the winding stairway that led to the organ-tribune. Here a jet of gas was soon kindled and threw a brighter light immediately around them—but its brilliancy seemed to stray off and be lost in the dark recesses of the church beyond, tipping here and there a projecting cornice with light, and leaving all else in deepest shadow.

And now the organist's desk was opened: for the instrument was so constructed that the player sat at some little distance from the organ itself, leaving an intervening space for the singers. In this intervening space the white figure of the church-angel—as she now really seemed—stationed itself. The stops of the soft swell-organ were drawn and distant voices, far back in the heart of the instrument, answered obediently to the player's touch. The tones seemed to come to him from some airy realm and with a strange and weird sweetness, for the white figure was between him and them—and they floated through *her* to his ear.

After a prolonged kind of music-dream, in which the young man ventured to say a great many things in the vague language of music which he would hardly have cared, perhaps, to utter in the plainer language of words, the choristers began to arrive:—and soon the rehearsal of God's worthier praises commenced. And now the organ—that majestic Preacher of glad-tidings—began to reveal its noblest resources; the deep-mouthed pipes launching forth their voices into the distant arches and the singers adding holy significance to the harmonious tumult—the white church-angel all the while looking dreamily on, with the same smile of unworldly sweetness in her face.

The multitude assembled on the following day to render their accustomed homage. Young men and maidens rehearsed their praise from the choir and she too was there, imparting to the services—as the organist thought—a still purer and holier significance.

On the following day both were in the church again and then the organ first began to answer to the touch of the young maiden's fingers, while her companion arranged the stops, or leaned musingly upon the desk, his thoughts floating off upon the rich waves of Mendelssohn's music, which he had given her to play, or his eyes watching the tender light in those sweet eyes of hers.

And thus passed several happy days and weeks. Sometimes the two were in the church together: sometimes she was there without him: but he always knew the hour when she was at practice and the thought that she was in so pure and safe a place was a very pleasant one to him. But yet a few weeks more—and all this had ceased: she had returned to her country home. At parting she hesitatingly said, that her parents, she doubted not, would be happy to see her friend and repay with hospitality what she found could not otherwise be cancelled:—and then the great city lost a gleam of sunshine—a certain grace and beauty departed from it.

In about a month from that time the sense of this lost *presence* in the air of the city grew so oppressive, that the young man could bear it no longer; so one summer day he followed the dove, which seemed to have flown from his heart, to her country nest. And O, what a sweet nest it was, my darlings!—Descending a wooded hill-side there lay, in loveliness before him, a Swiss-looking little village, at the head of a bay. On a higher level, still, than the bay, was a lake, with cottages dotting the shore here and there, while in the clear bosom of its water was mirrored the surrounding hills. The silver bay stretched far away in the distance and skirting it was a winding and shady road that led past the beautiful home of a great poet—and then came a noble old estate, and a little lake was at the foot of the lawn and on either side of the lawn stretched up a superb avenue of trees to a dear old Dutch homestead. As you approached the house there was a view, from under lofty trees, of the glittering bay beyond; and a cool breeze drew past you; and the honeysuckle and the grape-vine twined luxuriantly about the porch; and a dear, motherly old lady appeared in the parlor; and shortly after the ray of beautiful sunlight entered the room again and shone deep down into the young man's heart. This first visit to the dear old place was not the last one,—

you may be sure, my pets! And so it happened one day, that with every thing captivating about them and the birds singing as though their hearts would break for sheer happiness, that these two young people fell a-weeping—which is sometimes the way, my darlings, when we become too happy in this world, Heaven suddenly sending tears, as much as to say,—"take care—take care—there is but a step, oftentimes, between a great happiness and a great grief."

Pretty soon, however, there was a wedding: and the name of the fair young creature was changed from *Jessie Cairns to Jessie Willis;*—for, of course, my darlings, you have already guessed that my story was all about dear mamma and one whom she made so unspeakably happy by marrying—your father.

And so, we have been living all this time in our beautiful home which you know so well,—the sunlight from which has now departed. * * *

But come—go with me to our lonely parlor and let us talk about mamma. She was not only so simple and pure-hearted, so innocent and so true, but she had such sweet little hidden gifts and accomplishments of her own, which no one seemed to know very much about.

Look at these beautiful leather-work frames which so finely set off the engravings they surround

and stand out so richly from the frescoing of the walls—yonder Madonna, and the infant Saviour bearing the cross, and St. John and others—all are the work of her dear hands! Look at those brackets, too, supporting the white statuettes—how beautiful they are, with their pendant buds and flowers! Those two under the arch between the rooms were the last she ever made—and we put them up ourselves one evening, just where you see them, only a few weeks ago. And observe those charming crayon sketches of the old abbey and the ruin—how nicely drawn they are! And open that portfolio on the table: see what beautiful flower-painting!—was ever any thing more life-like and exquisite than that cluster of forget-me-nots? On yonder mantel, also, are two of her vases—the chastest and prettiest work in potichomanie I ever saw. Was she not a bright, gifted young mamma! And observe, too, in the arrangement of these rooms how much elegance and taste must have dwelt here these few happy years. How thoughtfully every thing is placed, with a view to a certain harmony and appropriateness of surrounding: the uses of light, so carefully studied—all that requires subdued shadow at a little remove from the windows and every thing that needs strong light near them: the effect of proper elevations, too, not for-

gotten—that darling little group of quail, for instance, just the right height for the eye, so that every body can stand and really enjoy it. Among the things which must necessarily disappear from our drawing-room observe, too, my darlings, yonder superb bouquet of autumn leaves, arranged so charmingly in the Indian canoe and suspended from the picture-rod to the wall. Those leaves, and the bright red berries peeping out between, were the last things we usually gathered, each autumn, before leaving our cottage at Roslyn: for arranged in this way they reminded us, through all the dreary snow-time, of pleasant country life.

And then her music—why, my darlings, it was not until we were some time married that I ever discovered how accomplished she really was in music; for she always seemed disinclined to play or sing for me. But one day as I was sitting alone in the dining-room after dinner, she having left some moments before, I suddenly heard the keys of our beautiful "Grand" in the drawing-room swept so lightly and tastefully, with such easy grace and chaste expression, that I was surprised and thought some accomplished musical visitor must suddenly have come in. After listening for a few moments I got up and peeping through the half open door—whom should I see but the dear little

mamma herself! There she sat, in her sweet little French cap, her face all beaming with musical pleasure and really puzzling me with an execution and a taste which I never dreamed she possessed. She afterward showed a decided talent, too, for musical composition:—I found, indeed, that years before, even, as a very young girl, she had composed an *epithalamium*, so-called, which had become a great favorite everywhere and to this day is well remembered and sung. Not long after my dear Annie was born, too, as she sat one evening with her young baby in her arms rocking thoughtfully back and forth, in that sweet kind of reverie into which she sometimes fell, I heard her half unconsciously improvising a beautiful little lullaby—the very same one which very soon was caught by all nurses, far and near, and to which many babies are to this day rocked asleep:—and it always seemed to me the prettiest little piece of heart-music in the world!

But now let us cross the hall to the library. In yonder bay-window, which commands that charming landscape of our sweet little church and its picturesque grounds just opposite (the prettiest place in all the city!) she used to sit with you, my pets, so proud of you—so proud of you!—and while those skilful and never-idle little fingers spirited together in (to me) so very mysterious a manner such a suc-

cession of little baby clothes, or some dainty French cap which she knew your papa liked, (and she never at all liked them herself, but wore them only on his account) there she would amuse you and be amused by you, for the hour together, while Annie made her wise little remarks about people and things in the street, and Blanche bounded from the window to the rocking-horse and from the rocking-horse to the window. And then when the neighbors passed and greeted her, she shed down upon each of them a ray of her own bright heart-light, which seemed so fresh and new each time! and if she thought that they looked admiringly at her babies (she could never think that they ever looked at *her!*) then she was the happiest, proudest little mamma in the whole city!

But ah—she had a kind smile for others than for comely and kindly neighbors. The poor and the destitute of the city knew on cold, winter days, where there was always a bright, happy face to be seen and an open hand to befriend them. She never sat any the less at the bay-window, moreover, because they found that out, and came very often and always in greater numbers. None ever applied in vain—each received *something:* even the poor, unsoliciting German, who came with his dog-cart for the ashes, was astonished now and then with a hod-full of

good fresh coal, thrown by the servant upon his heap of dusty cinders Money—food—clothing—fuel—each was contributed in its turn, as she deemed most necessary: so lavishly contributed, indeed, that at last the very servants in the house thought that their little mistress was going altogether too far, giving away so many needful household things, and they have told me (within a few days only) that they would actually hide away the keys of the store-room and closets from her, when they could get them, lest all the really-needed clothing and provision should disappear from the house. During the last hard winter, particularly, this charity of hers (about which I heard comparatively little—for she rarely spoke of it) was very active. One special object of it was a wretched little boy, who one cold day came shivering and staggering up the front steps, having caught sight of so pleasant a gleam of human sunlight in the window. He was pale and very sick—mortally sick, indeed, even then, of an incurable disease. From that moment this little boy became her special charge: and when it was said in the house that the "little sick boy had come," then the servants knew that no evasion and mislaying of the keys was of any avail. The day came at last when the little boy could no more leave his home—and then she

went to *him*. He could live at last only on stimulants, and the purest and the best she took care were always his. But even more than on stimulants did he seem to live on her kind smiles, in which the little fellow appeared to find, always, fresh life and hope. At last he seemed to become so very tenderly attached to her, that when she came into his sick-room he would burst into tears. He hardly knew why he cried, but—"his dear Mrs. Willis was so *very* kind to him." And thus she continued her visits to him until up to the time of his death—nearly to the time of her *own* death, my darlings!—for long after she *should* have visited him she still continued to go: and when her tears at last mingled with his dying tears, it was a very moving sight. Poor, dear mamma!—she followed him soon!—only a few weeks afterward!—

But now come up with me into the nursery. Here was her real pride-place! Here she chiefly lived—this was her world. Here were the little baby-clothes; here were the play-things; here, too, was that industrial miracle—a sewing machine. The play of the ivory piano keys was often quick enough under her fleet fingers, but it was nothing to the play of that swift needle when the little French cap and the bright, eager face hung over it! What a droll, triumphant expression when the click of the

machine became sharper and sharper, and more and more impetuous, and a little frock, a little apron, a little pinafore was turned off from it as though by magic! I well remember when that sewing-machine first met her view what a knowing little look she gave it—for she had a singular fondness for mechanism and—any one could see—unusual aptitude for it. And so when I came home, that very evening, I heard a most mysterious buzzing and spinning and—somebody did not look up at all from her work as I entered the room—and somebody had a face full of laugh and suppressed merriment—and somebody soon presented *somebody* with a beautiful specimen of machine-sewing! Nor only at the sewing-machine did she show her cleverness at the needle, for the prettiest hats I ever saw in the city were always her hats—and, my darlings, she made them herself! So when her gay and dressy lady-friends could not but remark upon the taste and beauty of her winter bonnet, or her spring bonnet, and inquired with natural curiosity what milliner she employed,—it was a trying question for the little milliner-mamma!—it being a novel thing, somewhat, in a city like this, that a lady should make her own bonnet. But yet, no real milliner could make one that was half so pretty, or half as well pleased either her husband or herself. And

you can judge from this, my dear little daughters, where *some* of the money, at least, that went to the poor sick boy, and to the poor and suffering of the city, might have come from—she saved it on her bonnets, her caps, her own and her children's clothing.

Now, when I think over, and put together, all the bright and clever things she did, both of elegant and useful art,—her leather-work, her potichomanie, her crayon-drawing, her flower-painting, her piano-playing, her music-composing, her skill as a needle-woman, her careful and ever-perfecting housekeeping—she, too, a child bred in luxury, who had never had a household care or thought until she married me!—when I think of all she really accomplished and remember her keeping up at the same time so large a visiting acquaintance, (which, it always seemed to me, was a business in itself,) why, my darlings,—of course I speak as her husband and great allowance must be made for my partiality and love for her,—but I do really think she was a perfect little wonder-mamma!

And yet, she thought so humbly of herself!—and always as of some simple country lassie, to whom green lawns and fresh flowers were much more natural than city drawing-rooms and a life on velvet carpets:—and yet, when placed in the city and

amid very much that was conventional and artificial, she came across every one like a breath of fresh air: and she was so natural, and unaffected and artless, so entirely unconscious and at ease, that she seemed like the highest-bred lady possible—as just for these very reasons she *really was!*—Every body loved her, though in many respects so unlike themselves.

No, my darlings,—your dear, lost mamma had not what usually passes for worldly tact and worldly wisdom, for everybody read her like a book. Neither had she artificial manners, nor habits: but she had that, which, for even worldly uses, is of such inestimably greater value—she had fresh, pure nature: a clear head, a sound judgment, a pure heart. She had, consequently; that which is often based upon these—a singular, natural insight into character and motives of action: so that people were often at fault with her; she seeming sagacious, when she was only *natural* and saw and judged the world through her own transparent and guileless mind.

Nor only her principles but her first instinctive *impulses* were singularly pure and free of taint. When she heard any thing ill of a person, the first movement of her mind was indignantly to reject it:—when any thing commendable, her mind was equally quick to accept and cherish it. Of her own sex it was especially difficult to make her

think aught that was evil—and the evil that she saw actually did exist, she invariably ascribed to outside, bad influences, working through those womanly affections which, in themselves, she believed pure and unselfish. This point I have often known her emphatically and—when in any way opposed—indignantly to insist upon. The strongest feeling I ever saw her evince was thus in behalf of her own sex, when instances of the wrong of man—cases which she could not doubt—came to her ear. Yielding and docile as a child in most things, the man was hardly forgiven or forgotten who deliberately caused an innocent woman to suffer. Argument was of no avail with her: deep as was her love of justice and goodness, equally deep was her hatred of injustice and wrong. I never really understood the holy indignation possible to an angelic being (simply from the pure heights of virtue from which this world's wrongs are viewed) till I knew your mother, my darlings! And so it came to pass, that those who knew her *best* respected her most and hesitated long before they did aught really to forfeit her good opinion, or call up that severest of all resentments—the resentment of a naturally innocent and pure spirit.

I tell you these things, my dear little daughters, because you yourselves will one day be women

and will know how to prize this quality in your mother.

People differ very much—as you will find, my children—in natural cheerfulness and brightness of disposition. Your mother had an eternal sunshine in her heart! She awoke with it; she fell asleep with it. She carried it about with her like an atmosphere. When she passed through a room she seemed to leave a *smile* in the air. You knew not why, but you felt cheerful and hopeful and happy whenever she came near you, or had been with you; you were courageous and strong, when before you had been, perhaps, desponding and doubtful. And this, not that she had said any thing, or done any thing, perhaps, to animate you, but she *looked* hope—and courage—and belief in this world—and trust in God!

But now come up stairs with me to my study Here we used to pass our evenings at home—and O what happy evenings they were! "No parties to-night, dear Dickon," she would say: "how delightful!—let us put out the drawing-room gas and close the shutters, so that we shall seem to be out and have a dear, sweet evening at home!"

"Yes,—here we are—but please shut the door, Jessie."

"O,—let me leave it open a little—just a crack."

"Why?—the cold-air comes in."

"Yes—but—my babies, you know."

"Well, you know they are all safe,—the nurse is with them down stairs."

"Yes—but then—if it is all the same to you, Dickon—just a little."

In short, I very soon found that tender heart of hers could never be persuaded really to *shut a door on her children.* "One little crack," I always observed, was invariably left open, though the cold-air came in ever so much, or the babies were ever so safe:—for she could not bear to shut them out, even in their sleep, from a seeming companionship with her and a participation in her own happiness.

Thus, then, with every thing to her mind, the door a little ajar, the fire burning brightly, her evening work before her, then came, for me, the reading or the writing, or the dear old songs we both of us loved so well, or some dreamy improvising on the sweet-toned Æolian piano, or the reading of some manuscript article for my paper — for I always availed myself of her clear little mind as to what I wrote: and if the comments that followed were not quite up to her usual cheery tone of commendation I concluded that I had not written any thing very bright, and afterward quietly put it in the fire, or re-modelled the whole.

Thus passed the happy hours, and days, and years. But they could not last for ever!—Let us descend, now, to the front bed-room. * * *

Hush!—my darlings—here she died!—A very holy and solemn place. Full of heart-ache for us—but ah! full, too, if we will but rightly regard it (which, alas! it is so very, very hard sometimes to do) of heart's *ease* to those who can truly realize the sleep in Jesus.

—It was God's will, then, four weeks ago, to give you that darling little sister—so white, so fair—*Jessie* we call her—and in mysterious exchange to take to Himself the other Jessie of our love. God could spare his pure child no longer:—the angels wanted their bright sister. And so,—she faded from us.

Do you observe yonder "Christ"—that hangs on the wall opposite the bed? A very solemn picture, by Albrecht Dürer—a single white figure on a cross, against a dark background. It seems not so very long ago, that I observed her, day after day, thoughtfully working on the frame that surrounds that picture. She twined the passion-flower about it—her own sweet conception of what was significant. When completed, she hung it where you now see it, directly in view of her pillow. Beneath the picture, on the mantel, she placed yonder statuette

of St. John, by Thorwalsden,—the apostle, with head erect, seemingly recording on that tablet in his hand the sufferings of his adorable Lord above him. On either side of the picture are heads in relief of the Saviour with his crown of thorns, and of Mary his mother.

It seems to me, my darlings, as though even at that time your sainted mother were preparing, by that sacred group of objects, holy windows through which her soul might, first in thought, and afterward in reality, wing its way outward and upward to other worlds. For when it came to the last dread hour, her eye became steadfastly and unwaveringly fixed on the Divine Sufferer:—through the film of the descending night, through the forms of friends who might chance for a moment to intervene, she seemed, still, to see only *The Christ.*

It was on Good Friday, then, of April 2d, 1858, that God gave us the tender little lamb that yet remains to us and touched for the sacrifice his other lamb—your mother. O that dread Good Friday! It *should* be "good" to us, for death *is* good if through it and by it we attain unto a better life. But Friday, to human feeling and despite our better judgment, *is* a dread day. O what a chill it always has for me! Alas for us, too, my darlings, on that very day, Friday week, Death entered our happy home!

On the day following the birth of little Jessie, you, my dear daughters, were on the bed all day long, delighting with your joyous prattle about the dear little sister your only too proud and happy mamma—who looked so well, *so* well, that it seemed unnecessary she should even remain upon her pillow.

The day following was Sunday and I crossed the street to the dear little church, the grounds of which were beginning to grow so beautiful again under the smile of spring, the first delicate spray and the tender blossoms just appearing: and I played the exulting organ with even more than usual gratitude to Heaven; while the boy-choristers seemed to me to quire more joyous praise to the good God than ever.

On my return—O what a change!—That sweet face—what had come over it!—The very shadow of death seemed to be there! * * *

Poor mamma was in great agony. She told me, with piteous tone, that she had had a *chill.* Ah,—the chill of death, I believe, even then, my darlings!

And yet, on Monday she seemed to be much easier and we almost hoped again—even my little Annie and Blanche were taken by their grandmamma to the country, that in the sweet sights and sounds of the old homestead they might forget the sad faces of their city home.

But, on Tuesday a raging pulse and more anxiety. On Wednesday, the shadows still darker—darker—and on the afternoon of that day our good physician first spoke to me of additional medical advice. Ah—I knew too well what *that* meant, my darlings!

And so he came—another and older adviser, and the sagacious eye, which could not be deceived, confirmed what could not have been hid from others.

On Thursday the dread question had to be decided (and God spare you ever in this world the sharp agony of that question!)—who shall tell her!

The good physician thought himself stronger than I, and so he left me in the library for a little, —but soon returned from her.

With feet that seemed to cling to the stairs and a heart all lead within me, I ascended to the dying room. * * *

That same bright, happy smile again!—just as sweet and fond as ever! And when the uncontrollable tears *would* flow she exclaimed,—"What is it, my darling?—I am better and easier now. The doctor, I am afraid, has unnecessarily alarmed you about me."

And so, I saw that the dear eye, which had always

so instinctively turned to the light, could not suddenly comprehend the dark—the doctor's words had been gently chosen—she had not understood him!

But, my darlings, the idea had been lodged in her mind and, though neither of us then alluded further to it, the next day when the doctor came and I was out of the room, she asked him calmly the momentous question:—and he was frank with her!

Serenely, quietly, like an announcement of returning health, she received the appalling tidings! "Comfort, my dear husband," were her first words. And yet her secret surprise was very great: for she soon afterward said to a lady friend,—"Can it be possible!—surely, I have not *suffered enough yet* —to die!

And so, that night a trusty messenger was sent for the absent mother and you, my babies. Toward midnight the little pleading note of pain which had continued for hours, seemed to be growing fainter: those sweet, acquiescing little expressions which she uttered in her wanderings, now and then,—"Yes, darling—O yes—yes, darling"—became less frequent: the bright face began to have strange shadows in it, and so, at dead of night, we sent over for the good Rector. He came to us accompanied by a gentle companion, who even at mid-

night could look upon death. And soon the last sacrament was administered,—the dying bed of the gentle sufferer being both chancel and altar to us who knelt around, while her pale lips opened, for the last time, for bread and for wine. Then came prayers and hymns for the dying:—

"Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee!
E'en tho' a cross it be
That raiseth me!

* * * *

"When the spark of life is waning."

* * * *

"I would not live alway."

* * * *

But this last hymn seemed to me suddenly inapplicable:—

"The few lurid moments that dawn on us here
Are enough for life's woes, full enough for its cheer."

O no,—no!—the daily testimony of that sweet spirit had been, "Life has been *so* beautiful!—not a cloud!—not a cloud!—I have been so happy—so happy!" How then could we say, that of such a life there had really been "enough?" O no,—the Good Father called her—for this reason, alone, she was content to go!

The dread Friday dawned upon us. I remember being entwined in cold arms and my head pressed close to a dying breast. I remember sweet words breathed into my ear—words of cheer and encouragement. I remember,—alas that I should remember!—words of praise and gratefulness, of pride even—for each word brought with it such a sense of my real unworthiness of her, such silent reproaches that my kindest words had not been kinder—that any indifferent words had ever been spoken!

I remember a dear little baby brought and placed for the last time in her mother's arms. The eye that was already glazing in death suddenly cleared itself and grew bright again—a flush mantled the pale cheek. What a change!—the whole face is radiant. "My darling!—how beautiful!" Then, with all a mother's rapture and pride she raises, with cold arms, the child high in air—she gazes at it with glittering eyes—she nestles it in her bosom; she presses it closely there and breathes words of passionate endearment.

And then baptismal water is brought: and the ear of the dying mother hears the words that are uttered, and the babe is signed with the sign of the cross and her name is called *Jessie!*

I remember, after hours of agonizing suspense,

during which her eager ear seems ever turned to catch the slightest sound of approaching wheels, and her eager look seems ever to say, "Have they come—Have they come?"—that, when hope is almost dying within us, a carriage approaches—it stops—"The children have arrived!"

But the eye seems already fixed: will it see the children now?—the ear seems closed to outward sound—will it hear their voices?

Annie and Blanche are borne swiftly to their mother's side. She speaks!—what a seraphic smile!—how the eye clears again!—what mantling health in those pale cheeks!—Death itself is forcibly driven back!—he yields his hold on her!—she will, she must, live again! "My darlings!" she passionately exclaims.

But Annie and Blanche—how strangely still they are! How thoughtful and affrighted little Annie's face, as, after the first burst of joy, she gazes down upon her mother. And Blanche, too—how those country roses in her cheeks are paling!

Ah, the little ones!—they cannot be deceived! They see Death behind those smiles—though by name they know it not!

But now she relapses—the children are taken—and soon restless hands become busy, and white

fingers are arranging work with the coverlid. See! —little baby dresses are preparing there! "Not so, not so,"—she sweetly says to those whom she is instructing in the fashioning of them—"this way—so—this way."

The momentary illusion passes. Reason returns, and with it an apparent consciousness of what is approaching: for putting up her arms she draws down to her for a dying kiss her husband—the good pastor—all the nearest and dearest of earth who are around her.

And now the last Friend is very near to her. She seems to hear him tenderly calling: and uplifting her eyes to the cross she averts them no more. Darker the shadows that settle in that sweet face—darker—darker. We kneel around the bed: we pray—we bitterly weep that such sweetness is passing from us! We know that all is well—we *think* we are resigned—our reason tells us that it *must* be best: but ah! these human feelings!—what shall we do with *them?* Did not Jesus weep for Lazarus? and, verily,—*he recalled him from the dead!* We weep—but for us there is no recall!

* * * * *

Close the eyes—she is in Paradise! Take thy seraph, Heaven! Her name is *Jessie.* Souls of

the long-departed—mother, sisters, brother—this is Jessie! Welcome her! Let her not feel strange among you—though with earthly eyes you never beheld her. Somewhere in her Father's mansion dwells a little sister, too, of hers. O seek her out!—let her not want for sweetest company!

* * * * *

But ah, Jessie dearest, forget not the living. We have such, *such* heartache for you! Come and dwell with us! I solemnly invoke you, this summer, to our cottage by the bay; to the pillow your dear head presses no longer; to the bedside of my children—*your* children, Jessie!—to the lawn, by the sweet moonlight; to the sands of the solemn sea. Your presence will not affright me: even your ghostly semblance: why should it? Did you not tell me, with dying lips, if come you might, come to me you surely would?

And then, the church—our own little church, Jessie—where first we knelt in holy communion; where our children first were consecrated to God. Occupy the sadly-vacant seat; kneel with me at the chancel-rail; descend, but for a while, from the radiant Upper Service to the humbler Lower; and when *Te Deum* and *Jubilate* reverently rise, let me, in my deepest heart hear, through the choristers' clear quiring, that sweet voice still!

And that reluctant organ, too!—how shall my uncertain fingers know how to touch it since you are gone, Jessie? What shall I say through its sweet pipes, now that the ears, that used to listen so, are closed forever! Alas, my music all seems flown with you to Paradise—my heart is mute and sings for me no longer!

* * * * *

My dear children, I have so wandered that I scarcely know where to resume. And what shall I say more? I remember, as of a frightful dream, the dread night-watchings with her who only was—and is, for earth, no more! I remember the midnight fears of the terrified servant, who, for a chance harsh word once spoken to the sweet departed, heard her silvery-mournful voice calling to her through the house-trumpet, at the dead of night. Ah, it was but the voice of conscience! What would she give to recall that hasty word!

I remember the presence in sweet, home-places, of dreadful men, who must needs perform their office, and the sight of all their harrowing paraphernalia. I remember going, the last midnight of her stay with us, to the room of the sweet departed. A single dim light was burning; the cold night-air blew chill through the open casement: there she lay in her icy shroud, just before the seeming altar of

her own fashioning—above her the adorable Sufferer upon the cross, and beneath, on either side, the altar-flowers (some thoughtful hand had put them there) the faded spring violets and the flower-basket I had given her—fresh as herself—but a short week before. The water of her icy shroud dripped—dripped—slowly and with hollow sound. I turned back the linen from her pale face, and my heart turned to ashes within me, and my knees faltered, and kneeling I tried to chant a *Miserere* and a *God be merciful.* But no music came to me—only bitter, blinding tears; until at length I *said* what I could not sing, and the good God gradually sent me peace. And so, at last, Jessie and I (she surely seemed to add her whispered utterance to mine!) repeated our usual evening hymn together: and when we came to the words,

> "O may my soul on thee repose,
> And with sweet sleep my eyelids close;
> Sleep, that may me more vigorous make,
> To serve my God when I awake:—"

How strangely applicable to both of us!—to the sleep of life—the sleep of death!

Nor did my heart rebel, at the close, as I tried composedly to utter

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, angelic host,
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost:—

— and at last, among that "angelic host" was now, for the first time, *my* angel, too!

So I lay down near her, and God gave me deep and sweet sleep until the morning. I awoke (a dreadful awaking!) to the indescribable agony of a new grief, after forgetful slumber—but let me not recall this. God was, at length, merciful to me.

And yet, my darlings—and yet—the loss of a mother is an irreparable loss! a loss, it really seems to me, never to be repaired but by the reparation of a re-union again, in another world. In our solemn litany, where comes the intercession for "fatherless children," my heart, I confess (and now how much more earnestly than ever!) has ever involuntarily substituted *motherless* children. And O, for you, poor little birds of mine, when I think of a life before you filled with such appalling shocks —such shipwrecks of dreams and hopes and bright anticipations as were even ours—still more, when I think that, as *daughters*, each—

"*Her* lot is on you,"

the lot of woman—a lot so agonizingly realized to

us, in one of its forms, but even now—my heart bleeds for you!

And yet—God's will be done! That sweet, fair casket, now shattered, which held all my heart's treasures, revealed to me from among its shattered fragments, that sweetest, but hardest, of all earthly lessons, *God's will be done!* Perhaps it must needs have been that the casket should be broken, for such a pearl in its inner depths to be secured to my soul.

I remember, Annie dear, that last summer, when walking upon the shore of the bay, you suddenly pointed upward and exclaimed, "Look, papa dear, look!—*a broken moon!*"

The young, crescent moon had just become visible in the evening sky. But, as I stood and gazed longer upon it I saw that the faint rim of the entire orb was still dimly visible—that darkly-completed circle, described by the old poet as "the old moon holding the young moon in its arms."

Well, Annie dear, like that *broken moon* seems to me now the broken orb of our earthly bliss—the greater, by far the greater part in dark eclipse to us. The world and its woes have slid in between us and the light, and thrown their dark shadow (like that of the natural earth across the disc of yonder moon when in actual eclipse) over our life's brightness.

But the light that *was*, is assuredly again to be! The dim crescent of our bliss is destined, as years move on and earth rolls off its dark shadow from us, to gain on the dark—to gain more and more, until the full-orbed glory shall be ours again!

Let us be comforted, then. For the light of eternity is coming—coming! It will be on us ere we are aware, and will make all sweet and bright again!

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